

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A heating element comprising:

at least one mica sheet and a heating ribbon, or strip, mounted on said sheet;

a support device in the form of a substantially flat plate holding said mica sheet and constituting a first reflector; and

a plate secured to said support device and constituting a second reflector.

2. (Original) The heating element of claim 1, wherein said support device is separated from said mica sheet by a first space.

3. (Original) The heating element of claim 2, wherein said support device has at least one projection coming in contact with said mica sheet and defining the thickness of the first space.

4. (Original) The heating element of claim 3, wherein said projection is in the form of a longitudinal rib

that creates at least two distinct substantially closed volumes situated at the interior of said first space.

5. (Currently Amended) The heating element of claim ~~4~~2, wherein said plate is separated from said support device by a second space.

6. (Currently Amended) The heating element of claim 5, wherein said plate has at least one projecting part that comes in contact with said support device to define the thickness of said second space and to form a substantially closed volume within said second space.

7. (Original) The heating element of claim 5, wherein said plate has at least one air inlet opening that communicates with said second space.

8. (Original) The heating element of claim 1, wherein at least one of said support device and said plate is made of stamped and bent sheet metal.

9. (Currently Amended) The heating element of claim 1, wherein at least one of said support device and said plate has a surface that is treated to have good heat reflection properties.

10. (Original) An electric toaster comprising: a base; a case having an upper end; a toasting chamber disposed

in said case and having an opening in the form of a slot at said upper end for the introduction and removal of bread; a movable bread support rack in said chamber; and at least one substantially vertical heating element as defined in claim 1.

11. (Currently Amended) The electric toaster of claim 10, wherein said case is separated from said plate of said heating element by a ~~third~~space that forms an open volume at the level of said upper end directed toward said slot.

12. (Original) The electric toaster of claim 11, wherein said plate has at least one spacer that comes in contact with said case.

13. (Currently Amended) The electric toaster of claim 12, wherein said base has at least one air inlet opening that communicates with said ~~third~~space.

14. (Currently Amended) The electric toaster of claim 11, wherein said base has at least one air inlet opening that communicates with said ~~third~~space.

15. (Original) The electric toaster of claim 10, wherein said plate has at least one spacer that comes in contact with said case.

16. (New) The electric toaster of claim 10, wherein said support device of said heating element is

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interposed between said at least one mica sheet and said plate.

17. (New) The heating element of claim 1, wherein said support device of said heating element is interposed between said at least one mica sheet and said plate.